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## SPECIAL ANALYSIS

USSR - WESTERN EUROPE: Concern Over Detente

by [REDACTED] CIA

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*The USSR is increasingly concerned that West European reactions to its military involvement in Afghanistan will seriously damage carefully nurtured relations with Europe. As was the case with its recent campaign against theater nuclear forces, Moscow is striving to disengage West European governments from the US and its proposed measures of retaliation against the USSR. Moscow will welcome--and encourage--any evidence that the West Europeans themselves are seeking greater independence from the US.* [REDACTED]

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As US-Soviet relations have soured and prospects for closer US-Chinese cooperation have increased, a stable working relationship with Western Europe has become more essential to the USSR. Moscow wants to allay West European security concerns, forestall closer NATO military cooperation, and derail NATO's plans for TNF. Moreover, the Soviets want to discourage major West European nations from participating in a US-led boycott of the Olympic Games or joining in US economic sanctions. [REDACTED]

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The current Soviet campaign against the US emphasizes the fundamental differences in US and West European interests as well as US "arrogance" in imposing its will on NATO. President Brezhnev sounded these themes in his *Pravda* interview on 13 January. [REDACTED]

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In personal exchanges with West Europeans and in their press commentary, the Soviets also have stressed that the US is an "unreliable partner" quick to take dangerous and capricious foreign policy actions primarily in response to domestic political imperatives. As the West Europeans seem to give more serious consideration to joining the US in retaliation against the USSR--partly as a result of the move to silence Andrei Sakharov--Moscow is warning that "the price will be paid primarily by the Europeans." [REDACTED]

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### West Germany's Role

Moscow recognizes that West Germany will play the central role in any West European consensus on policy against the USSR. The Soviets initially took a cautious, largely conciliatory line with the Schmidt government, urging it not to allow the US to "stab detente in the back." In their more recent dealings with Bonn, however, the Soviets have not minced words.

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The Soviets also have hinted that anti-USSR policy decisions could result in economic damage to the Schmidt government and undercut its electoral position. In its press commentary, Moscow has reminded Bonn that Soviet retaliation to any embargo would broaden unemployment. At the same time, the Soviets have held out the inducement of economic benefits; West German banking officials reportedly are being approached with requests to assume the financing of projects previously understood to have US, French, or Japanese backing.

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Moscow is linking Schmidt's expected visit to the USSR before the West German elections this fall to the overall state of Soviet - West German relations. It has clamped down on official East European contacts with Bonn, in part to indicate to Schmidt that he cannot routinely conduct business with the East Europeans if West Germany applies sanctions on the USSR.

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### Elsewhere in Europe

Moscow has made a special effort to encourage France's sustained refusal to entertain the idea of an economic boycott or other major retaliatory gesture against recent Soviet policy moves. The Soviets have emphasized the "special relationship" between the USSR and France, given a top-level reception to the visiting president of the French National Assembly, and sent their First Deputy Foreign Minister to Paris at France's request

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to explain their position. They evidently consider President Giscard's recent assurance that Paris remains committed to the policy of detente an encouraging indication of France's future policy toward the USSR. [redacted]

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Moscow's efforts to obtain the support of West European Communist parties for its intervention in Afghanistan have had mixed results. The French Communist party gave its unequivocal support, while the Italian and Spanish parties criticized the Soviets. The Italian party, the largest Communist party in Western Europe, reacted to the invasion with its strongest condemnation to date of Moscow's foreign policy. [redacted]

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#### Moscow's Next Moves

Moscow has already warned several West European governments that it will react sharply to any significant actions intended to punish the USSR for its intervention in Afghanistan. [redacted]

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The USSR is anxious about the impact further European reaction to Soviet moves will have on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe review session scheduled for November in Madrid. Soviet officials will urge the Europeans to attend the meeting in the interest of preserving detente. [redacted]

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Now that the Soviet refusal to discuss TNF and the postponement of SALT II consideration has stalled the East-West arms control dialogue, the Soviets portray the meeting in Madrid as crucial to the continuation of serious arms controls talks. [redacted]

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Moscow probably will continue to dramatize its commitment to detente to the West Europeans. The Soviets might, for example, indicate greater interest in France's proposal for a disarmament conference in Europe, which Moscow previously has been unwilling to accept. The Soviets also may continue to drop hints about a possible withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan to reassure the West Europeans that the USSR is not planning any further action in that region or elsewhere that could damage Western interests. [redacted]

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